

While putting together this issue, Antoine and I had many a discussion about strong images of violence and how in North American society in particular, violence seems to be far more acceptable than similarly intense images of sexuality. Isn't it interesting that the first to die in most genre horror movies are the teens that sneak off to have sex?

Now don't get me wrong, I love me an intense action flick with guns a blazing, cars and people rocketing through the air pulling off these crazy moves to take down the rat-bastard of a villain. When the Matrix pioneered that abrupt stop motion *in media res*, I was floored by how much it ratcheted up the adrenaline. So why do we enjoy it so much?

I think it's for the same reasons we all love a good horror movie: violence and fear get our blood pumping, but in a socially acceptable way. Sex does too, but in a much more potentially embarrassing way and so we like to keep that as private as we can.

If I take a moment now to tell you my favourite monsters have always been the seductive and erotic vampires, you can understand how I like my particular blend of horror—violent and scary, sure, but also with a healthy dose of sensuality. And I'm not the only one. The rampant popularity of the *Twilight* franchise and the run away success of TV's *True Blood* series seem to underline how a good fright, especially from something dangerous, always gets us all charged up. Throw the monster into a drop dead gorgeous package and you've suddenly got the perfect blend of everything that gets our hearts hammering in our chests: sex, violence and fear, the three primal states that jumps our fight or flight response into overdrive. No wonder we've

had such an enduring fixation on these blood sucking creatures of the night.

Maybe that's why our homo society has such a special place in our hearts for Halloween. We've always been able to effectively channel the mounting tension of the season into our hormones, and sneaking off into the woods to satisfy that urge scares us no more than any of the other violent oppressors we've had to face down during our coming out.

In this issue we run the gamut of your fears, from things as simple as dating and spiders, to the more gut-wrenching, like dungeons and surviving a gay-bashing. Throw in gay movie directors Ron Oliver and David Decoteau talking about homo horror and guys being chased in their underpants, and you'll understand why we've called this our Monster Issue.

You know, I think there's another reason why our community loves this scary time of year so much—it's because we're brave. We've looked into society's funhouse mirrors, found ourselves and come to accept ourselves and then we courageously stride forward and continue to be ourselves in a society that sees US as the monsters. Once you've endured that trial by fire, there's really not a lot left to be afraid of, is there?

Jeff Harrison

